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Security Council

Seventieth year

Provisional

7358th meeting
Tuesday, 13 January 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Barros Melet	(Chile)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Chad	Mr. Mangaral
	China	Mr. Zhao Yong
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Jordan	Mr. Hmoud
	Lithuania	Mr. Baublys
	Malaysia	Mr. Haniff
	New Zealand	Mr. McLay
	Nigeria	Mr. Laro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Spain	Mr. Oyarzun Marchesi
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Wilson
	United States of America	Mr. Pressman
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Thirty-fifth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2014/892)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

Thirty-fifth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (S/2014/892)

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Côte d'Ivoire to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedures, I invite Ms. Aïchatou Mindaoudou Souleymane, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/2014/892, which contains the thirty-fifth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire.

At this meeting, the Security Council will first hear a briefing by Ms. Aïchatou Mindaoudou Souleymane. I will then make a statement in my capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) concerning Côte d'Ivoire.

I now give the floor to Ms. Mindaoudou.

Ms. Mindaoudou: I thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to speak before the Council in order to present the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Cote d'Ivoire (S/2014/892), dated 12 December 2014, and to provide an update on recent developments in the country.

I am optimistic for Côte d'Ivoire. During the past six months, Côte d'Ivoire has continued to make important progress towards sustainable peace and sustained economic recovery. The completion of several important infrastructure projects, as well as the return to Abidjan of the headquarters of the African Development Bank and the successful organization of several regional and international events in the country, are an indication of the confidence of the international community in Côte d'Ivoire's recovery and potential.

As noted in the report before the Council, President Ouattara and his Government continue to take steps towards consolidating national cohesion and reconciliation. Concrete measures have been taken, including the release on bail of some 300 persons detained in connection with the post-election crisis, the unfreezing of bank accounts, the return to their legal owners of illegally occupied properties, and the reintegration into public service of those associated with the former regime. A significant number of Ivorians affiliated with the former regime, including former top officials, have also returned to the country. Political dialogue with the former ruling party, the Front populaire ivoirien (FPI), which had stalled since 22 May 2014, resumed on 29 December 2014, and has been reinvigorated. The Government is committed to finding concrete solutions to all the concerns raised by the FPI.

A new Independent Electoral Commission comprised of 17 commissioners, four of whom are women, was inaugurated on 11 August 2014. The Commission, with the participation of the opposition, has initiated its work and is moving forward in implementing its mandate. With presidential elections on the horizon, political positioning and pre-campaign activities have begun. So far, eight personalities across the political spectrum have announced their intention to run for the presidency next October.

With the support of international partners, I hosted a consultative platform at the headquarters of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) in Abidjan, on 18 and 19 December 2014, aimed at enhancing dialogue among a wide spectrum of political actors. This was an important opportunity to constructively engage on ways to ensure the conduct of successful elections. All participants, representing 23 different political parties and civil society organizations, agreed that certain measures were warranted to address the shortfalls of the 2010 elections. These measures were, inter alia, reducing the number of arms in the hands of non-State actors, impartial treatment for all alleged perpetrators of the 2010 post-election violence; compensation for victims, the return of those living in exile; impartial justice, the release or trials of detainees linked to the 2010 post-electoral crisis, and the updating of electoral lists. These are important concerns that shall be fully engaged.

UNOCI will continue to work closely with all concerned actors to ensure the conduct of a transparent and inclusive election. We will also continue to engage with international partners to ensure coordinated support to the work of the Commission. In addition, the Mission will continue its close engagement with the Government to ensure that the necessary security measures are in place to guarantee the conduct of peaceful and secure elections. ONUCI FM radio will also continue its efforts to sensitize the larger public on democratic values and to advance peace education.

(*spoke in French*)

The Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission completed its three-year mandate and submitted its final report to the President of the Republic on 16 December 2014. The report provides details on the events that occurred during the most recent crisis; an analysis of the root causes of conflict; recommendations in the area of political, administrative and institutional reforms; and proposals for ensuring reparations for the victims and the duty to remember. The report is currently before the President of the Republic, who has also made $20 million available for reparations for the victims in 2015. He has also sought the support of partners in supporting the Government's efforts to ensure the timely implementation of the process.

I began my statement by expressing my optimism for Côte d'Ivoire. However, while we have cause for satisfaction, progress still needs to be made in several areas. We must remain vigilant and determined to ensure that the hard-won gains that have helped to promote stability and prosperity in the country are irreversible.

The fight against impunity, an essential factor for national reconciliation in Côte d'Ivoire, is proceeding slowly. Furthermore, we must step up our efforts to ensure that the perpetrators of human rights violations, including sexual crimes, are prosecuted and brought to justice, particularly when the suspects are uniformed officials. With regard to acts of sexual violence, I am pleased to note that a committee of national experts on conflict-related sexual violence was established on 21 July 2014. Moreover, the Forces républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire have undertaken an awareness-raising campaign for its troops on this important issue. UNOCI is providing technical support to the committee of national experts on conflict-related sexual violence and continues to encourage the authorities to adopt a zero-tolerance policy on issues of sexual violence.

On 1 December 2014, some 150 people close to former President Laurent Gbagbo detained in the Abidjan Detention and Correction Centre for alleged crimes during the post-electoral crisis, began a hunger strike to denounce the conditions and duration of their detention without any ruling on the matter. On 25 December, I went to the prison to meet these detainees, who agreed to suspend their hunger strike the same day. I indicated to the national authorities the urgent need to accelerate the legal proceedings so as to ensure the impartial handling of the situation of all those accused of human rights violations and abuse committed during the post-electoral period, without consideration of their political affiliations. That would also contribute to advancing and strengthening national reconciliation and political dialogue. It was to meet these concerns, among other things, that the political dialogue between the Government and the opposition resumed on 29 December 2014.

Coordinated demonstrations organized by the Forces républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire throughout the country illustrate, in case there was any doubt, one of remaining challenges to achieving effective and integrated security sector reform. A comprehensive security sector reform process is essential to ensuring that Côte d'Ivoire's security institutions are not only a constructive force in guaranteeing stability and security of the country, but also a tool to maintain democratic gains. The security forces must meet the necessary professional and ethical standards and norms. This is crucial to strengthening the confidence of the civilian population in their security institutions. UNOCI will continue to support and encourage the Government in completing the necessary reforms.

The disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process is making satisfactory progress. However, it still needs work before we can declare mission accomplished. In fact — as the Authority for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration has said — after June 2015, the target date set by the Ivorian authorities for the end of the DDR process, there will still be a surplus of about 14,000 former combatants who will have to be rehabilitated and reintegrated. UNOCI will continue to support the Authority, in cooperation with its international partners, in order to ensure the speedy and effective completion of the DDR process.

Although the security situation has improved significantly since my last briefing to the Council (see S/PV.7197), armed robbery, banditry and other criminal activities continue to pose security challenges throughout the country. I am happy to note, however, that we have seen a slight decrease in inter-community conflicts, particularly those involving undisciplined members of the Forces républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire, former combatants and dozo. On 10 January, after more than six months of calm in the areas bordering Liberia, there were two attacks on security force posts in western Côte d'Ivoire, in which two soldiers lost their lives and 1,600 people were displaced from the area. UNOCI's forces immediately intervened to protect civilians and provide support to the national security forces. The attacks demonstrate both the importance of making progress in the political process and how vital it is that Côte d'Ivoire establish a professional security force capable of protecting its people.

So far there have been no confirmed cases of Ebola in Côte d'Ivoire. The epidemic in West Africa has nonetheless affected refugee returns and prevented Ivorian and Liberian security forces from conducting the joint activities they used to undertake on the borders. It has also temporarily halted inter-mission cooperation between UNOCI and the United Nations Mission in Liberia. I would like to take this opportunity to commend the Government and the private sector for their efforts, which, with the support of donors and the United Nations, have enabled them to respond effectively to the epidemic in terms of preparedness and prevention. However, while combating Ebola remains a priority, it will be important to implement a humanitarian strategy for the period 2014-2015. More internal resources must be mobilized in order to support residual humanitarian needs, resettle people displaced from Mont Péko and implement a national strategy for natural risk reduction.

As outlined in resolution 2162 (2014), the drawdown of UNOCI's strength began on 1 December with a reduction of 840 troops. The current strength of 6,300 troops will be reduced to 5,437 in June. After a comprehensive restructuring and review of its concept of operations, the military and police components of UNOCI are now much more mobile and visible. They are much more capable of meeting the people's needs and ensuring the protection of civilians and the security of United Nations personnel. At my request, the troops now train regularly, including with live ammunition, in order to be better prepared for every eventuality. UNOCI's operational flexibility will further increase with the deployment of its rapid reaction force of 650 troops, which will be operational in May.

Regarding the general outlook, as the Council is aware, Côte d'Ivoire is entering an election year. Creating an environment conducive to holding free, democratic and fair elections will depend upon the progress that has to be made in the areas of electoral reforms, maintaining a political dialogue, DDR, security-sector reform and justice. Côte d'Ivoire still needs support if it is to build on the gains made so far and complete the important process it is engaged in. For that, the continued support of the Security Council, Member States and international and regional partners remains essential.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Ms. Mindaoudou for her briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004), concerning Côte d'Ivoire.

On 29 October of last year, in my capacity as Chair of the 1572 Sanctions Committee, concerning Côte d'Ivoire, I briefed the Security Council on the Committee's work (see S/PV.7292). At the time, Council members reminded me that I had promised to brief them again on my return from my visit to Côte d'Ivoire, which took place from 2 to 7 November. During the visit I explained its purpose to everyone I spoke to, which was to emphasize the importance of the full implementation of the provisions of the relevant Security Council resolutions, gather information first-hand on the situation in the country and promote meaningful dialogue between the Government of Côte d'Ivoire and the Committee. Both President Ouattara and the ministers I met emphasized how positively they perceived a visit from the Chair of the Security Council's Sanctions Committee, a promising sign that has strengthened cooperation and dialogue between the Council and Côte d'Ivoire.

The authorities I met were very receptive and ready to engage in serious dialogue. For example, the Minister of Defence outlined the needs of all the armed forces in detail, explaining that many of their security needs had to do with preparing for the national elections, scheduled to take place later this year. He described

his priorities and the reasons behind the requests he had submitted to the Committee for the relevant authorizations. As I expected, the President and his ministers expressed their desire to see the sanctions fully lifted. My response was that my visit was an opportunity to assess the degree to which the Côte d'Ivoire authorities were implementing the relevant resolutions and the difficulties they were encountering in doing so. I underscored the fact that the measures in force were carefully designed to support the efforts to establish peace and post-conflict development that are under way in Côte d'Ivoire.

In view of the significant changes that have taken place in the sanctions regime since last year, particularly the lifting of the embargo on trading in diamonds and the partial lifting of the arms embargo, I explained that additional changes would be dependent upon the progress made in implementing the four pillars of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, security-sector reform, national reconciliation and fighting impunity. Generally speaking, I had the impression that significant progress had been achieved, but that more needed to be done for Côte d'Ivoire fully to comply with its obligations pursuant to the relevant resolutions, in particular as regards the upcoming elections in October.

I underscored in particular the Council's concerns with respect to the lack of progress made in reintegrating former combatants and the need to establish security forces that are inclusive and responsible, so as to ensure the stability of the country. In the run-up to the elections, Côte d'Ivoire will need to have police and gendarmerie forces that are sufficiently trained and equipped in order to ensure a democratic and peaceful process.

In that context, I noted that some ministers were not fully aware of the changes introduced by resolution 2153 (2014) with regard to the process to be followed to request from the Committee equipment for the police and the gendarmerie. During the meetings held at the various ministries, I explained in detail the procedures to be followed to submit notifications and request exemptions to the arms embargo. I promised them that, together with the Secretariat, I would help them prepare and present such submissions to the Committee.

With regard to lifting the embargo on the sale of rough diamonds, it was very useful for me to meet not only with the Deputy Minister of Industry and Mines, but also with the local communities that participate in the production of this important natural resource. When I visited the areas of Seguela and Tortiya, I saw the importance of the lifting of the embargo for the larger local communities. I deplored the fact that the export of diamonds had not resumed, but I understand that it will take time to restore the national capacity to ensure the traceability of sales of this important resource. I trust that the second visit in the framework of the Kimberley Process, scheduled for next March, will confirm the significant progress achieved so that the country and the local communities can reap the benefits of the legal trade in this natural resource.

I reiterated to the local authorities the importance of cooperating with the Group of Experts. I highlighted its independence and underscored the need to respond to its requests for information. I explained that the best way to make the Government's views known was to respond to the requests of the Group; otherwise, the Government was closing off an important means of communication with the sanctions Committee. The authorities promised to improve their cooperation. I took the opportunity to provide to the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs a complete list of the communications or submissions submitted to the Group of Experts that still had not been responded to. On 5 December, I had the opportunity to inform the Committee about my visit to Côte d'Ivoire.

I would like by way of conclusion to once again express my gratitude to and support for the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, the Group of Experts and the Permanent Mission of Côte d'Ivoire throughout my visit. I should like also to thank the delegation of France and the Secretariat for supporting me throughout this very important initiative that I undertook on behalf of the Committee.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Bamba (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): Since this is the first time that I am taking the floor under your presidency, Sir, I wish to extend to you the sincere congratulations of my delegation on the assumption by your country, Chile, of the presidency of the Security Council for January 2015.

My delegation takes note of the excellent report of the Secretary-General (S/2014/892), dated 12 December 2014, and thanks the Special Representative of the

Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire, Her Excellency Ms. Aichatou Mindaoudou Souleymane, for her briefing on the situation there. I should like to thank you, Mr. President, for your working visit to Côte d'Ivoire in November 2014 in your capacity as Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) concerning Côte d'Ivoire, during which you were able to see first-hand the exceptional progress that has been made in all sectors of activity in the country. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General also confirmed in her briefing the remarkable progress made in all areas as a result of the efforts undertaken under the authority of President Alassane Ouattara.

I should like to now stress a few salient points.

First, regarding the upcoming presidential elections to be held in October 2015, President Ouattara and his Government are committed to ensuring that the elections are transparent, inclusive and peaceful in order to strengthen peace, stability and democracy in our country. Political dialogue between the Government and the opposition, facilitated in particular by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, has resumed, as she said. In this regard, we would like to note with satisfaction the establishment of the new Independent Electoral Commission, which is consensual, and which includes representatives of the opposition and civil society.

There is now intensive activity among all political parties in the country in the run-up to the elections of October 2015. All of this bears witness to the irreversible commitment of the Ivorian political class to the culture of democracy.

In the area of justice, President Ouattara is determined to build an equitable society base on impartial justice accessible to all. He recently indicated that following a difficult period, during the post-electoral crisis, which had led us on occasion to have recourse to international justice, our judicial system was now on track thanks to the reforms undertaken by the Government and the improvement of the working conditions of the judges. Today our country can guarantee equitable justice to all and respect the norms of international justice with regard to the judicial process and trials. The process under way with regard to the post-electoral crisis will make it possible, once justice has been provided to all concerned, including those indicted by the National Commission of Inquiry, to definitively turn this painful page in our history and to consolidate national reconciliation.

With regard to national reconciliation, the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, has concluded its sterling work after three years of activity. Its Chairman, Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny, submitted the final report of the Commission to the President of the Republic on 15 December, during a formal ceremony. The Commission's mandate was to work independently to build social cohesion among all communities in Côte d'Ivoire, including through transitional justice. The Commission's report, which covers this process of reconciliation, can be broken down into four parts: the preparatory phase; the quest for the deep-rooted causes of the crisis; hearings, investigations and testimony; and recommendations and reparations.

The hearings held by the Commission made it possible to obtain the testimony of 72,483 people, including 28,064 women and 757 children. That testimony shed light on events and made it possible to identify those who suffered harm during the crisis. The hearings also provided the basis for a typology of the kinds of violations committed and the damage caused and their legal and juridical nature. On the basis of the testimony gathered, the Commission made recommendations for reparations.

President Ouattara took note of the Commission's report and asked the Government to consider it in order to implement those recommendations that it considers pertinent in order to complete the process. He announced that a reparations fund for victims would be put in place in 2015, with an initial amount provided by the Government of Côte d'Ivoire of 10 billion CFA francs, or $20 million. He asked our international partners to support those efforts by making a contribution.

In the area of security, the situation continues to proceed apace, and the city of Abidjan now has the same level of security as New York and Geneva. However, we are aware that significant efforts are still needed to achieve a fully satisfactory situation. That is where security-sector reform comes into play, as was pointed out by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

In that regard, I note that the Permanent Mission transmitted to the members of the Security Council, through the Chair of the 1572 Committee, a comprehensive account of the security sector reforms being undertaken by the Government of Côte

d'Ivoire. That dossier sets out Côte d'Ivoire's vision of security sector reform, which aims to modernize our defence capabilities, strengthen the operational capacities of the security forces and ensure regular capacity-building through training. The doctrine is centred around the following six pillars: national security, post-crisis reconstruction, the rule of law and international relations, democratic oversight, economic governance, and the human dimension. The doctrine also incorporates 108 operational decisions and will be implemented in four stages — urgent, short-term, medium-term and long-term.

On 11 December 2014, the Council of Ministers adopted a draft law on the organization of the defence and armed forces of Côte d'Ivoire. The text, which superseded the previous law of 1961, was developed as part of the new Ivorian army in the context of security sector reform. The draft law will be introduced for consideration before Parliament as soon as possible with a view to modernizing the armed forces of Côte d'Ivoire.

With regard to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, we noted that progress is satisfactory and that more than 46,000 former combatants — that is 62 per cent — had been reintegrated into the socioeconomic fabric.

With regard to the diamond sector, following the adoption of resolution 2153 (2014), which lifted the embargo on diamonds produced in Côte d'Ivoire, the Government developed a post-embargo strategy that takes into account the implementation of the Kimberley Process. The strategy, which seeks to complete the traceability system for the export chain, is built around four components: strengthening the governance framework, building evaluation capacity, implementing anti-fraud activities and establishing legally constituted purchasing offices.

Paragraph 14 of resolution 2153 (2014) provides for a review mission at the end of January 2015. However, following consultations with the Chair of the Kimberly Process Working Group on Monitoring, it was agreed that the review visit would take place from 10 to 20 March 2015, as you noted, Mr. President. This period was proposed so as to allow for testing of the entire system, including export. All of these elements are set out in a letter from the Ivorian Minister of Industry and Mines transmitted to all members of the Council through the Chair of the 1572 Committee.

Overall, since 2012, Côte d'Ivoire has been engaged in the implementation of a diamond supply chain that is transparent and that upholds the minimum standards of the Kimberley Process, while maintaining open and frank dialogue with the 1572 Committee and its Group of Experts. As such, we are working together to ensure that the Kimberley Process review mission can fully meet the spirit of resolution 2153 (2014), which in our view should evaluate the entire Côte d'Ivoire diamond value chain.

With regard to economic recovery, economic growth was expected to reach 9 per cent by the end of 2014, confirming the renewed dynamism of the Ivorian economy. President Alassane Ouattara intends for all Ivoirians to benefit from that growth, which he is determined must be inclusive. From 2015, Government action will therefore focus on social sectors and on strengthening stability, including by implementing universal health coverage, continuing to implement technical platforms for hospitals, building new health facilities, implementing the education for all programme, stepping up the decentralization of universities, creating jobs and reducing youth unemployment, providing housing, fighting poverty and high living costs, supporting women's economic and commercial activities and gender promotion, compensating victims of the post-election crisis, furthering the process of national reconciliation and social cohesion, and continuing dialogue with the opposition.

At the regional level, regarding the Ebola epidemic, thanks to the drastic measures taken by the Government, both at borders and within the country, no Ebola cases have occurred in Côte d'Ivoire. However, Côte d'Ivoire has shown its solidarity with the affected neighbouring countries by providing $1 million to the Economic Community of West African States Ebola response fund. In addition, Côte d'Ivoire deployed medical personnel to the affected neighbouring countries, at the request of the African Union and West African Health Organization.

In conclusion, given the significant progress made in all sectors of the country, we can say, as has President Ouattara, that the year just past marked the beginning of the transformation and modernization of Côte d'Ivoire. The construction of the Henri Konan Bédié Bridge on the Ébrié lagoon in Abidjan, which opened on 16 December 2014, in many ways symbolizes the renewed dynamism in the Ivorian economy. President

Ouattara and his Government remain committed to doing everything possible to continue on this promising path so as to consolidate the gains and ensure lasting stability in Côte d'Ivoire.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.